



President Commissions New Patrol Boats For Fisheries Surveillance

Thursday, March 1st, 2012

The President, H. E. Prof. Evans Atta Mills commissioned four (4) new patrols on 20th February 2012 for the Ghana Navy at the Sekondi Naval Base.

The acquisition and commissioning of the four (4) new patrol boats, the first of its kind in the past 32 years is fulfillment of the President's promise on assumption of office to provide patrol boats for the Ghana Navy for monitoring, control and surveillance operation in the fishery waters of Ghana. With the procurement of the patrol boats the Ghana Navy is now in a position to protect Ghana's marine environment which abound in diverse resources including minerals, oil, gas and fish stocks. The procurement of the patrol boats will also enable the Ghana Navy combat and deter piracy at sea, illicit drug trafficking, dumping of toxic waste, human trafficking and illegal fishing at sea.

Two (2) of the patrol boats namely, GNS BLIKA (P34) and GNS GARINGA (P35) were procured by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and are to be dedicated to fisheries surveillance in Ghanaian waters to enhance national fisheries Governance.

In his statement, the Minister of Food and Agriculture, Hon. Kwesi Ahwoi, said that the greatest challenge facing Ghana's fisheries sector relates to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing practices by both local and foreign fishing crafts. He said Ghana is under international obligation to put in place measures to combat, eliminate and deter IUU fishing practices in Ghana waters. IUU fishing practices have not only led to reduction of Ghana fish stocks but also resulted in loss of revenue for development of the Ghanaian fishing communities.

Hon. Kwesi Ahwoi was happy that the patrol boats are capable of policing the coastal, inshore and offshore of Ghana. For their presence will not only reduce the conflict between the canoe and industrial trawlers as result of industrial trawlers moving into areas reserved for the canoe fishermen, incidence of fishing boats being used for ferrying of narcotic drugs, human trafficking and but also deter foreign vessels from poaching fishing in Ghana marine waters.

The Hon Minister of Food and Agriculture said that the Government recognizes the contribution of the fisheries sector to the socio-economy development of the country through:

- Employing directly or indirectly 2.4 million people
- Providing 60% of animal protein of the populace
- Ensuring the livelihood of coastal communities

The Government will therefore do everything to ensure that fisheries sector continue to play its role in the economic development of the country.

The Hon. Minister informed the gathering that the Government through the Ministry of Food and Agriculture is implementing various developmental programs that will boost the fisheries sector. The programs included:

- Construction of an all purpose fish factory at Elmina;
- Development of landing beaches under the Chinese Loan Facility;
- Establish of Fisheries Enforcement Unit;
- MOFA in partnership with the private sector have ordered the right fishing gear;
- Management of the premix that had ensured accruing profits are used for the development of the communities; and
- Education of the fisher folks on the Fisheries Act 2002 and Fisheries Regulation 2010 to enhance fisheries governance.

The new patrol boats were constructed by Poly Technologies Inc. of China under a Supplier Credit Agreement. Hon Kwesi Ahwoi took opportunity to express his appreciation and gratitude to Poly Technologies Inc. for completing the construction of the Patrol boats on schedule, the Ghana Navy for their technical supervision and the former Ghana Ambassador to China for facilitating the Agreement.

He hoped that the presence and use of the patrol boats would ensure the judicious management of the fisheries resources of Ghana and contribute to sustainable livelihood of the fishing population of Ghana.



GNS BLIKA



GNS GARINGA



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